

Gender Related Differences in Clinical Characteristics and Hospital Based Resource Utilization Among Older Adults with Schizophrenia

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Objective: This report is an analysis of gender related differences in clinical characteristics and hospital based health resource utilization among older adults with schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorder in an acute care, state hospital over a one-year period. *Methods:* This retrospective record review is an analysis of age of illness onset, psychiatric and medical comorbidity, hospital utilization, and psychotropic medication use. *Results:* There were a total of 66 individuals with either schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder. Mean age of this group was 55.2 ± 4.62 years. Women were significantly over-represented among individuals with late onset schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorder. Men with schizophrenia had more comorbid substance abuse compared to women with schizophrenia ($p < .05$). Women and men did not differ significantly in hospital length of stay, amount or type of antipsychotic medication prescribed, or in utilization of seclusion/restraint in hospital. Both genders had substantial utilization of antipsychotic medication. Use of conventional antipsychotic medication monotherapy was always associated with use of anti-extrapyramidal symptom (anti -EPS) medication, while use of atypical antipsychotic medication monotherapy was more rarely associated with use of anti- EPS medication. *Conclusions:* In later life, women and men may have some areas of differing health care needs. Women in particular may benefit from psychoeducational approaches that address the experience of psychiatric illness of relatively recent onset (for example, symptom identification and acceptance of illness). Men may benefit from particular emphasis on treatment of comorbid substance abuse disorders.